



GARNER REVITALIZATION ASSOCIATION

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Garner: A North Carolina Main Street Community

An Accredited National Main Street Program

NEWS RELEASE

Garner Citizen and Downtown Project Recognized by North Carolina Main Street Program

Elmo Vance named Main Street Champion, and Downtown Pop-Up Shops project awarded Best Retail Promotion

GARNER, N.C.—Elmo Vance was honored on April 1 as a 2013 Main Street Champion at the North Carolina Main Street Annual Awards Ceremony in New Bern. Vance was selected by the Garner Revitalization Association for this special recognition in appreciation of his exceptional contributions to the downtown revitalization process. Along with Champions from 32 other communities, he received a certificate commemorating this designation, presented by N.C. Assistant Secretary of Commerce Dr. Pat Mitchell and Office of Urban Development Director Liz Parham.

In recommending Vance for this honor, the GRA offered the following:

Elmo Vance joined the Garner Revitalization Association board of directors in 2006, shortly after the organization's inception. He has since served two terms as chairman, volunteered for numerous projects, lobbied Town Council for support and served on the 2010 Historic Downtown Garner Plan steering committee.

Elmo worked tirelessly to help educate citizens about this downtown redevelopment plan, created in partnership with the Town of Garner, and the importance of downtown to the whole community. Many of the plan's proposed projects were included in a recent \$35.7 million bond referendum, which voters approved by more than 65%. This overwhelming support is due in part to Elmo's outreach, educational, and community-building efforts on behalf of the Garner Revitalization Association and the town he is dedicated to improving.

A constant voice of reason and a source of stability, Elmo Vance has been a great asset for the Garner Revitalization Association.

The GRA also announced that a local project was recognized for its excellence in the 2013 N.C. Main Street Awards competition. *Downtown Pop-up Shops* won top honors in the category of Best Retail Promotion, receiving an Award of Merit.

Downtown Pop-Up Shops are a series of temporary, or “pop-up,” shops organized during downtown special events to allow local artists, creative professionals and businesses that don't have a retail presence to show and sell their products. The project began in May 2012 with the addition of Art off Main to GRA's existing Music off Main Downtown Concert Series and continued with a holiday market during the town's tree-lighting celebration and Christmas parade.



GRA Board Member Neesy Green, GRA Executive Director John Hodges, Garner Council Member Kathy Behringer, Main Street Champion Elmo Vance and his wife Beverly attend the North Carolina Main Street Awards Banquet on April 1, 2014. Photography by Garry Hodges.

About the Main Street Program

The North Carolina Main Street program provides technical assistance, education and networking opportunities to 61 communities committed to downtown revitalization. The program is part of the Department of Commerce's Office of Urban Development, Rural Economic Development Division. For more information, visit www.nccommerce.com/rd/main-street.

About the Garner Revitalization Association

The Garner Revitalization Association (GRA) is a non-profit organization that supports the development of the downtown area as a vibrant business, residential, entertainment and cultural center in partnership with government and private organizations following the Main Street Four-Point Approach®.

For additional information about the GRA or this news release, contact John Hodges, GRA Executive Director, at (o) 919-773-4402, (m) 919-395-8307, downtowngarner@nc.rr.com or visit www.downtowngarner.com.